# Get Ready Alberta

## Year One Report to Albertans

Alberta
GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA

One year ago, the Government of Alberta presented a new economic strategy that recognized the province's substantial current strengths and anticipated the challenges of tomorrow.

*Get Ready Alberta* set new directions in four key areas:

- Unleashing innovation
- Leading in learning
- Competing in a global marketplace
- Making Alberta the best place to live, work and visit.

We saw how these new directions affect three young Albertans with their futures ready to unfold. Laura, just finishing university and ready to take her first step into the workforce. Max, still in high school and thinking about his options for the future – whether to stay on the farm, get a trade, learn more about computers, or start his own business. And Jennie, a curious five-year-old in her first year of school, with all the opportunities and hopes that holds.

Three young Albertans – three dreams for the future.

*Get Ready Alberta* was designed to make sure the dreams of Laura, Max and Jennie – and all Albertans young and old – will be met.

But what has happened since the plan was launched? Are we making progress? Are we getting ready? The answer is yes, we are well on the way.

This report presents the major first-year accomplishments of *Get Ready Alberta*. It is part of our commitment to keep Albertans informed and involved every step of the way.

***We've taken major steps since Get Ready Alberta was unveiled early last year. And there's more to come. We'll work to keep Alberta strong as ever.***

***Premier Ralph Klein***

# Key Areas

## Unleashing innovation

The world is changing quickly. Knowledge, innovation, research and technology are the driving forces of economic growth and prosperity. If young people like Laura, Max and Jennie are to fulfil their dreams for the future, Alberta must take centre stage as a leading centre of innovation and bold new ideas.

## Leading in learning

Getting ready for the future starts with our kids. The best preparation for Laura, Max, Jennie and all Albertans comes with a healthy start and a good education. Perhaps like no other time in our history, a solid education and an ongoing commitment to learning are essential for each Albertan's success and the success of the province. More than 60 per cent of new jobs created in the next five years will require a post-secondary education. That means Albertans need to be ready with the knowledge and skills to succeed.

## Competing in a global marketplace

*Get Ready Alberta* asks all Albertans and Alberta businesses to set their sights on the global marketplace. To compete internationally, Alberta needs to enhance its infrastructure, maintain a competitive tax advantage and a positive business climate, encourage integrated resource management, and promote international trade and market opportunities.

## Making Alberta the best place to live, work and visit

Albertans want economic success to be matched by an outstanding quality of life. Parents of young people like Laura, Max and Jennie want their children to grow up in a province with safe and caring communities, strong health and education systems, a clean environment, and vibrant cultural and sporting activities.

# Unleashing innovation

## Goal

Alberta is a world leader in innovation, research, development and commercialization of new ideas.

## Major first-year accomplishments

- Stimulating investment and research with a $500-million endowment for the new Alberta Heritage Foundation for Science and Engineering Research.
- Announcing a provincial Supernet contract to give 420 Alberta communities equal access to affordable high speed Internet by 2004.
- Creating the Alberta Informatics Circle of Research Excellence Inc. to strengthen Alberta's research infrastructure.
- Increasing total investment in research and development to an estimated $920 million, up by $50 million over 1999.
- Creating an estimated 4,000 jobs in Alberta in the information and communications technology field.

# Leading in learning

## Goal

All Albertans have the opportunities they need to learn, adapt and develop new knowledge and new skills.

## Major first-year accomplishments

- Opening 2,263 new post-secondary spaces in information and communications technology programs from September 1999 to September 2001 inclusive.
- Investing more than $1 billion in the New Century Schools Plan over 3 years to improve the condition of Alberta schools.
- Upgrading post-secondary institutions through a one-time $200-million infrastructure investment, to be spent in 2001-02.
- Increasing the proportion of Albertans participating in post-secondary education to 33%, up from 32% in 1999.*
- Improving high school completion rates to 71% from 70% in 1999.
- Increasing enrollment in a second language to an estimated 25% of high school and post-secondary students, up from 23% in 1999.*
- Increasing the number of participants in training and employment programs who felt they learned new skills to 88%, up from 83% in 1999.

# Competing in a global marketplace

## Goal

Alberta is internationally recognized as a good place to invest and do business. Alberta businesses compete and succeed in a global marketplace.

## Major first-year accomplishments

- Announcing a plan to save businesses $1 billion by cutting corporate income taxes in half by 2004.
- Securing our financial future by committing $5.6 billion to reduce Alberta's accumulated debt by about 45%.
- Expanding Alberta's presence in the global marketplace by participating in the 2000 world exposition in Hannover, Germany.
- Increasing value-added exports to $20.4 billion, up $4.1 billion from 1999.*
- Expanding employment by 34,900 new jobs, for a total of 1.6 million jobs.
- Bringing twinning of the North-South trade corridor to 69% of completion, up from 57.3% in 1999.
- Implementing, on January 1, 2001, the 10% single rate personal income tax system which rewards initiative.

* *Comparision is with 1999 actual as opposed to estimate in the original strategy document.*

# Making Alberta the best place to live, work and visit

## Goal

Albertans enjoy an unmatched quality of life in a province that's recognized as the best place to live, work and visit.

## Major first-year accomplishments

- Investing nearly $500 million in the health care system in 2000-01 to improve access to front-line services, reduce waiting times, enhance services for seniors, expand health promotion, keep pace with technology and address capital and equipment needs.
- Establishing Climate Change Central, a public/private sector partnership to help Alberta become more energy efficient and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Expanding our provincial network of parks and protected areas by 5,800 square kilometres to bring the total amount of Alberta land protected through legislation to 11.5%.
- Increasing tourism revenues to an estimated $4.4 billion, up $200 million from 1999.*
- Maintaining Alberta's position among the top three provinces for fewest person-days lost due to workplace injury and illness.
- Connecting 97% of Alberta communities to the Internet, up from 93% in 1999.
- Narrowing the gap between Alberta's crime rate and the national average.
- Maintaining self-reported health status figures that exceed the national average.

For more information or
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*Get Ready Alberta*
is available through the Internet at
www.alberta-canada.com/getready

You can also provide feedback through Alberta
Connects at www.albertaconnects.gov.ab.ca

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